Developing Your Site-Specific Arts in the Parks and Historic Sites Project:
Guidelines for Communicating and Collaborating with Park and State Historic Site Staff

Arts in the Parks and Historic Sites is "a *collaborative* program" – a good relationship with staff will make your project stronger.

- **Visit the site / park** as soon as possible.

- **Contact staff early** (property or site manager, interpreter, and other staff as needed and as listed in the guidelines). What is "early"? Depending on your grant application and approval timeline, your first contact with staff could be anywhere from two months (at minimum) to even a year in advance.
    - Even in the planning stage (i.e., as you formulate your project and write your grant application), contact park or historic site staff to discuss your project identify potential conflicts between what you would like to do, and what the park or historic site can sustain.
    - Find out the best time(s) in the historic site or park's calendar year for your proposed project.
    - Once your grant in approved, follow up with your park / site contacts.
    - You may need to reserve your space or shelter for your event use – make the reservation(s), if needed, as soon as possible to ensure that you have access to the facilities that you will need.

- **Educate yourself about the historic site or park(s) you hope to work in** – the history, structures, facilities, landscape, etc. Peruse the yearly calendar to get an idea of high-use times and key annual events. As your own project planning proceeds, you will need to communicate with ~~park~~ staff to coordinate your proposed work with preexisting programming.
    - Park and historic site staff will also be able to help you determine the nature of the audiences you are likely to be serving (ages, ethnicities, languages spoken, and other demographics). **Assume a wide range of ages (three-generation participation), with plenty of kids, especially in summer.**

- **Know, and follow, park and historic site policies.** Most of this information is readily available in every historic site or park's website or informational brochure. In addition, talk to the historic site or property manager and/or park interpreter for further information that may not be included in the brochure and website.

- **Design a project that places a minimal burden on park / site staff and facilities.**

- Unless you intend to engage a specific, already-established ~~park~~ event (with approval from **park / site** staff), **design a project with minimal impact on other parks / sites activities and** ~~park~~ **visitors.** Keep in mind that during busy times, your Arts in the Parks and Historic Sites –funded event may be only one of many events happening at the park / site.

- **Strive to be "green" and self-sufficient in your interaction with the park / site,** working from a "pack it in, pack it out" mindset. Along these lines, remember that:
  - **You won't be able to create/install permanent structures.** Things like digging postholes, gathering flora or fauna, etc. aren't allowed.
  - You may not be able to set up in certain areas or use certain chairs or tables if they are considered artifacts.
  - Account for set-up and clean-up logistics in mind as you develop your project.

- **Engage the public, and advocate for your art and the parks / historic sites!** It's likely that you will be interacting with many different people as you present your Arts in the Parks and Historic Sites project – all ages and backgrounds, from Indiana and elsewhere. Be friendly, courteous, and welcoming, and keep in mind that you'll be representing your own work AND the host park / historic site during your project.

- **Try to let the park inform your Arts in the Parks and Historic Sites project design, even if you're working from an already-established project in your repertoire.** The most engaging Arts in the Parks and Historic Sites events are **firmly connected to place** – "tailored to the unique assets of the site"

- **Remember that your final project MUST match up with what you describe in your original grant application.**